

# Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
*September 15, 2021*

## Attendance

### Board Members Present

Joseph Secrist, President	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Richard Bulman	(R)
Wadella Thomas *	(R)
Susan MacKinnon *	(D)

### Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

### Board Attorney

Curt Booth attended in the absence of Lyndsey Ryan

### Public

None

### Other

Justinian Dispenza of Andover Media

\* Via video conferencing. Ms. MacKinnon joined the meeting following approval of the minutes.

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held September 15, 2021 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present. Mr. Secrist noted that this meeting is being streamed live to enable the public to access the meeting and to enable them to provide comments on the proposed changes in polling locations in the Oxford and Bozman precincts.

## Approval of Minutes

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of August 18, 2021, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bulman moved approval of the minutes as presented. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Addition/Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Secrist asked that the Closed Session include a personnel matter. Mr. Black moved approval of the agenda with this addition. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **Election Director's Report**

Ms. Cook provided a written report of the activities of the staff prior to the meeting. A copy of that report is attached. She elaborated on her written report as follows:

- Postcards regarding the change in polling locations were sent on August 25, 2021. No requests to participate in this meeting or to provide comments regarding the proposed changes were received.
- Regarding our request to address the Board of Education to close schools on election day, Ms. Cook noted that the school calendar for 2022-23 is not on the agenda for their meeting of September 15, 2021, as we had been previously advised.

## **Board Attorney's Report**

Mr. Booth reported that the Board Attorney Lyndsey Ryan and her new baby are doing well. He is filling in for her while she is on maternity leave.

## **Old Business**

- a. Facility for Election Office

Ms. Cook had nothing new to report regarding our request for consolidated space.

- b. Budget FY2022

Financial reports for expenditures for the current period were previously provided to Board Members. Ms. Cook reported that some of our expenses for FY2021 were improperly entered in the FY2022 report and the county will adjust this with an audit journal entry at a later date per the county finance officer.

c. Review of Invoices

Ms. Cook previously provided Board Members with copies of invoices received since the last meeting. There were no questions from Board Members.

d. County Bulletins

Ms. Cook previously provided copies of County Bulletins. There were no questions from Board Members.

e. MAEO/Biennial meeting

Ms. Cook and each Board Member reported on their attendance at these meetings.

**New Business**

a. Polling place changes

Notice had been mailed to registered voters in the Bozman and the Oxford precincts regarding possible changes to the polling places. Ms. Cook reported that no responses were received with comments or requests to attend this meeting either in person or by video. In response to a question, Mr. Booth advised the Board that it may take action to approve the changes as announced in the mailed notices. Mr. Bulman moved that the Board approve the change of polling location for Bozman district /precinct 02002 from Bozman United Methodist to St. Michaels Middle/High School and the change of polling location for Oxford district /precinct 03003 from Oxford Community Center to Oxford Firehouse. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

b. School Board meeting

Ms. Cook reported that the agenda for the School Board meeting for September 15, 2021 does not have the school calendar for 2022-23 as an agenda item as she had previously been advised. She has signed up to address the School Board Members regarding our request that high schools be closed on election day. Her presentation will be limited to three minutes and there will be no opportunity to respond to questions. Because of a controversial topic on the agenda, she expects that there will be a large public turnout. She has safety concerns and will determine if she will make her presentation at the meeting when she arrives.

Discussion ensued regarding how to proceed with our desire to have access to the school facilities in a manner that is safe and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act. Ms. MacKinnon then moved that a letter be sent to each Member of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools, with copy to the Star Democrat, restating the reasons for our request to close schools on Election Days. She offered to draft such a letter and circulate it for comments to the Board Members, Ms. Cook and Mr. Booth. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Several Board Members asked that copies of the final letter be sent to the Central Committees of the two major parties.

### **Confirmation of next meeting**

Mr. Secrist noted that the next meeting of the Board of Elections will be Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

### **Closed Session**

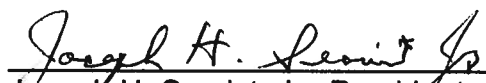
Mr. Black moved that the Board go into closed session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals as permitted under General Provisions Art. 3-305(b) (1). Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Whereupon the Board went into closed session at 10:50 a.m. Present at this session were Board Members Mr. Secrist, Mr. Black, Ms. Thomas, Ms. MacKinnon and Mr. Bulman. Mr. Booth attended for Board Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Ms. Cook and Mr. Dispenza departed the meeting at this point.

At 11:08 a.m. the Board returned to open session. President Secrist reported that the Board discussed specifics regarding a personnel issue and reaffirmed its previous action.

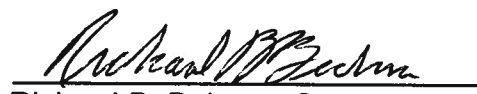
### **Adjournment**

Mr. Black moved adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Attested,

  
Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,

  
Richard B. Bulman, Secretary

September 15, 2021 – Director's Report

- The postcards were sent to the voters of Oxford and Bozeman on August 25, 2021.
- Payroll that is showing in the FY2022 budget that should have been applied to the FY2021 budget will be adjusted with an "audit journal entry" per county finance.
- Next Director's meeting call is set for Tuesday, September 14, 2021
- I have not heard from the Board of Education as to when and if we will be on the agenda for their September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. I have called, left messages and received nothing back. The agenda is not posted on the website at this time.
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**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")  
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

**This form has two sides. Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.**

- 1. Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: September 15, 2021; Time: 10:50 AM;  
Location: Conference Room 1, 215 Bay Street, Easton, MD. 21601;  
Motion to close meeting made by: Walter Black; Seconded by Wadella Thomas;  
Members in favor: Black, Bulman, Thomas, Secrist, MacKinnon; Opposed: None; Abstaining:  
None; Absent: None.

- 2. Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**  
**This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:**

**(1)**☒ "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; **(2)**\_\_\_ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; **(3)**\_\_\_ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; **(4)**\_\_\_ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; **(5)**\_\_\_ "To consider the investment of public funds"; **(6)**\_\_\_ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; **(7)**\_\_\_ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; **(8)**\_\_\_ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; **(9)**\_\_\_ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; **(10)**\_\_\_ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; **(11)**\_\_\_ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; **(12)**\_\_\_ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; **(13)**\_\_\_ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; **(14)**\_\_\_ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." **(15)**\_\_\_ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

**Continued →**

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) ( 1 )	Consider Appeal of previous action regarding grievance	Consider personnel action appeal.
§3-305(b) ( )		
§3-305(b) ( )		
§3-305(b) ( )		
§3-305(b) ( )		

4. This statement is made by Joseph H. Secrist, Presiding Officer.

*Joseph H. Secrist*

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**WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)**

- For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:

Time of closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Members who voted to meet in closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons attending closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics actually discussed: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Each recorded vote: \_\_\_\_\_

- For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104): Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons present: \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects discussed: \_\_\_\_\_